

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 AID-05 DHA-02 TRSE-00 OMB-01

IGA-02 ACDA-07 /106 W

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R 251512Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2882

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 ADDIS ABABA 1176

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ET, US, SU, SA

SUBJ: SEELYE MEETING WITH ACTING FONMIN

SUMMARY: DURING AMB SEELYE'S CALL ON ACTING FONMIN  
GETACHEW KIBRET, LATTER STRESSED HIGH VALUE EPMG ATTACHED  
TO CONTINUING BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP, NOTWITH-  
STANDING REVOLUTIONARY POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT. GETACHEW  
WAS SHARPLY CRITICAL OF SAUDI ARABIAN ROLE IN SUPPORTING  
ANTI-EPMG ELEMENTS AND INFLUENCING SUDAN TO ASSUME  
HOSTILE STANCE VIS-A-VIS ETHIOPIA. HE PRESSED FOR  
CREATION OF GRAND COALITION OF ALL POLITICAL FACTIONS  
IN DJIBOUTI AS BEST MEANS OF ASSURING PEACEFUL TRANSITION  
TO INDEPENDENCE AND ASKED FOR US SUPPORT IN PROMOTING  
THIS IDEA. SEELYE, WHILE CONCENTRATING ON POSITIVE AS-  
PECTS OF BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP, POINTED OUT PROBLEMS  
CREATED BY HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS, ANTI-US MEDIA  
ATTACKS AND OTHER DIVERGENCIES OF POLICY. HE ANNOUNCED  
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THAT MILITARY ASSISTANCE GRANTS WOULD BE TERMINATED  
AFTER CURRENT FISCAL YEAR, ALTHOUGH SECURITY CREDITS  
WERE STILL AVAILABLE AND FOREIGN MILITARY SALES WOULD  
CONTINUE. SEELYE ATTEMPTED TO COUNTER BLACK PICTURE  
OF SAUDI ARABIA AND SUDAN PAINTED BY GETACHEW, EXPRESS-  
ING OPTIMISM THAT SUDAN AND ETHIOPIA SHOULD BE ABLE TO  
RESOLVE THEIR DIFFERENCES. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING AMB SEELYE'S OFFICIAL CALL ON ACTING FONMIN GETACHEW KIBRET FEB 24, GETACHEW BEGAN BY CHARACTERIZING VISIT AS TIMELY OPPORTUNITY TO EXCHANGE VIEWS SHORTLY AFTER NEW ADMINISTRATION HAD COME TO OFFICE. ETHIOPIA SAW ENCOURAGING SIGNS IN RECENT US POLICY TOWARDS AFRICA. LIBERATION ASPIRATIONS NO LONGER PLAYED SECONDARY ROLE IN US THINKING, AND USG EFFORTS TO RESOLVE PROBLEMS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA HAD PROVEN CONSTRUCTIVE AND WERE WELCOMED BY EPMG.

2. GETACHEW REFERRED TO LONG-STANDING BILATERAL US-ETHIOPIA RELATIONSHIP. HE EXPRESSED GRATITUDE FOR ALL PAST ASSISTANCE RENDERED AND LOOKED FORWARD TO CONTINUATION OF RELATIONSHIP WHICH EPMG "VALUED VERY HIGHLY." AT SAME TIME RELATIONSHIP WAS CHANGING. IN CONTRAST TO ETHIOPIA'S PAST PRO-WEST STANCE, INDICATIVE OF COLD WAR ERA, ETHIOPIA NOW FOLLOWED POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT, SEEKING TO ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH ALL COUNTRIES ON BASIS OF EQUALITY AND NON-INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS, IN KEEPING WITH GREATER INTERDEPENDENCE OF NATIONS WHICH HAD BECOME FACT OF LIFE.

3. GETACHEW REFERRED TO FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES WHICH HAD TAKEN PLACE IN ETHIOPIA DESIGNED TO BRING MASSES INTO LIFE OF NATION AND UTILIZE THEIR ENERGY FOR DEVELOPMENT OF COUNTRY. THESE CHANGES HAD OFTEN BEEN MIDUNDERSTOOD IN THE WEST, PARTICULARLY IN MEDIA, WHICH TENDED TO DESCRIBE REVOLUTIONARY EVENTS IN ETHIOPIA AS NEW  
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PHENOMENA, AS IF OTHER COUNTRIES HAD NOT GONE THROUGH SIMILAR CONVULSIONS. SOCIALIST COUNTRIES HAVE SHOWN UNDERSTANDING, SYMPATHY, AND SUPPORT FOR REVOLUTION, AND HAVE RESPONDED FAVORABLY TO EPMG'S ATTEMPTS TO DIVERSIFY ITS RELATIONS. AT SAME TIME ETHIOPIA CONSIDERED US A MAJOR POWER WITH CAPACITY TO DETERMINE MATTERS OF WAR AND PEACE. EPMG EXPECTED US TO PLAY ROLE IN SOLVING MAJOR WORLD ISSUES AND LOOKED FORWARD TO GREATER US INVOLVEMENT, PARTICULARLY IN MATTERS OF DEVELOPMENT.

4. GETACHEW SINGLED OUT SAUDI ARABIA AS HAVING MAJOR RESPONSIBILITY FOR ETHIOPIA'S WORSENING RELATIONSHIP WITH SUDAN, AND FOR ITS CONTINUED DIFFICULTIES IN ERITREA. SINCE US MAINTAINED CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH SAUDI ARABIA, HE FELT THAT US SHOULD ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE SAUDI ACTIONS, SO THAT THEY WOULD USE THEIR PETRO DOLLARS FOR BENEFIT MANKIND INSTEAD OF DISRUPTIVE ACTS AGAINST HER INTERESTS. IN HIS VIEW A SIMILAR US

EFFORT WITH SUDAN ITSELF COULD ALSO BE HELPFUL.

5. AMB SEELYE OUTLINED BRIEFLY STATE OF PLAY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA ISSUE, EMPHASIZING THAT NEW US ADMINISTRATION HAD DEEP INTEREST AND CONCERN FOR AFRICA, IDENTIFIED WITH AFRICAN ASPIRATIONS, AND WISHED TO INTENSIFY ITS EFFORTS ON THIS CONTINENT.

6. TURNING TO BILATERAL RELATIONS SEELYE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT PROBLEMS EXISTED, BUT STATED THAT BOTH SIDES SHOULD CONCENTRATE ON MORE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF RELATIONSHIP AND SHOULD IDENTIFY AREAS WHERE THEY COULD WORK TOGETHER. USG HAD ENDEAVORED TO CONTINUE ITS PROGRAM IN ETHIOPIA ON STEADY BASIS, BUT IT WAS NOT ALWAYS EASY TO DO SO WHEN QUESTIONS WERE RAISED AT HOME AS TO MEANING OF PRESS ATTACKS ON US AND WHEN POLICIES OF TWO COUNTRIES DIVERGED IN SOME AREAS. HE AGREED THAT SOME MISUNDER-

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STANDING EXISTED ABROAD AS TO WHAT ETHIOPIA WAS TRYING TO ACHIEVE. IF THERE WERE THOSE IN ETHIOPIA WHO BELIEVED THAT US TOOK JAUNDICED VIEW OF EVENTS IN ETHIOPIA BECAUSE OF EXISTENCE THERE OF SOCIALIST REGIME, HE WANTED TO ASSURE THE MINISTER THAT THIS WAS NOT THE CASE. US HAD NO QUARREL WITH SOCIALIST APPROACH TO PROBLEM SOLVING PER SE. MANY REFORM PROGRAMS BEING CARRIED OUT IN ETHIOPIA WERE VERY SAME ONES WHICH US HAD FREQUENTLY ATTEMPTED TO PROMOTE HERE WITH PREVIOUS GOVT IN PAST. THESE PROGRAMS MET STANDARDS FOR SEEKING HUMAN PROGRESS IN WHICH US BELIEVED. US ALSO WELCOMED STATED ETHIOPIAN POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT, WHICH IS COMPATIBLE WITH US CONCEPT OF WORLD ORDER. USG DOES NOT DEMAND ACTIVELY PRO-WEST OR PRO-AMERICAN STANCE FROM OTHER COUNTRIES, AS LONG AS THOSE COUNTRIES IN DETERMINING THEIR NATIONAL INTERESTS LEAVE THEIR DOORS OPEN FOR USEFUL COOPERATION WITH ENTIRE WORLD.

7. SEELYE EXPRESSED PLEASURE OVER FACT THAT PROGRESS WAS BEING MADE ON ETHIOPIAN COMPENSATION FOR NATIONALIZED US CONCERNS, A DEVELOPMENT WHICH HE SAW AS HELPFUL TO BILATERAL RELATIONS. ON OTHER HAND, USG FACED STRONG CURRENTS OF DOMESTIC AND CONGRESSIONAL OPINION. CONGRESS HAD GROWN STRONGER IN RECENT YEARS AS RESTRAINING FORCE ON FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. IT, ALONG WITH NEW ADMINISTRATION, WAS TAKING HARD LOOK AT COUNTRIES WHERE VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS WERE PERCEIVED. DESIRE TO ASSURE EXISTENCE OF LEGAL SAFEGUARDS FOR INDIVIDUALS WAS CONSISTENT WITH US ASPIRATIONS FOR AFRICAN PEOPLE AS WHOLE. WHILE USG RECOGNIZES THAT NEW REGIME IN THIRD WORLD WOULD SOMETIME FEEL THEY MUST TAKE

EXTRAORDINARY MEASURES IN CONSOLIDATING THEIR POSITIONS,  
HE FELT OBLIGED TO SAY THAT CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS  
THROUGHOUT WORLD WOULD INCREASINGLY AFFECT US ATTITUDES  
ON INTERNATIONAL ISSUES.

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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA  
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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA 13)

8. AMB SEELYE STRESSED THAT US SUPPORTED TERRITORIAL  
INTEGRITY OF ALL COUNTRIES AND THIS POSITION IS CON-  
SISTENT WITH PRINCIPLES IN OAU CHARTER IN THIS REGARD.  
THESE PRINCIPLES APPLIED IN ETHIOPIA, BUT ALSO IN  
DJIBOUTI. US WAS LOOKING FOR WAYS TO USE ITS INFLUENCE  
IN ASSURING A PEACEFUL TRANSITION TO DJIBOUTI INDE-  
PENDENCE. FOR MOMENT, US HAD NO INFLUENCE ON SOMALIA  
ACTIONS, BUT IT WAS CONSULTING WITH FRENCH, WHO AWARE  
OF US DESIRE FOR ORDERLY AND PEACEFUL TRANSITION. HE  
ASSURED GETACHEW THAT US WOULD DO WHAT IT COULD AND  
WELCOMED ANY SUGGESTIONS EPMG CARE TO MAKE. US SUP-  
PORTED CONTINUED FRENCH MILITARY PRESENCE IN DJIBOUTI  
AFTER INDEPENDENCE SHOULD NEW GOVT THERE SO DESIRE,  
BUT WAS FIRMLY OPPOSED TO ANY MILITARY INTER-  
VENTION IN DJIBOUTI ON PART OF OUTSIDE POWER. AS FOR  
US VIEW ON SAUDIS, HE BELIEVED SAUDIS ALSO SUPPORTED

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TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF ETHIOPIA AND WOULD NOT FAVOR DISMEMBERMENT OF COUNTRY. BY SAME TOKEN SAUDIS SUPPORTED DJIBOUTI TRANSITION TO INDEPENDENCE AND HAD ESTABLISHED CONSULATE THERE TO THIS END. AS FOR SOMALIA, SAUDIS WERE INDEED ATTEMPTING TO PULL SOMALIA AWAY FROM ITS PRESENT ORIENTATION AND TO WEAN IT FROM SOVIET CONNECTION, BUT WERE CERTAINLY NOT IN LEAGUE WITH SOMALIA.

9. SUMMING UP, SEELYE STATED THAT USG WISHED TO HAVE AS SATISFACTORY RELATIONSHIP AS IT COULD WITH EPMG. US PLANNED TO CONTINUE ITS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS AND MIGHT EVEN BE FAVORABLY DISPOSED TO INCREASING THEM, IF ADEQUATE JUSTIFICATION COULD BE PROVIDED CONSISTENT WITH DEVELOPMENT NEEDS. ON OTHER HAND, MILITARY MATERIEL GRANT ASSISTANCE WOULD TERMINATE AFTER CURRENT FISCAL YEAR IN CONFORMITY WITH WORLDWIDE CUTBACK IN US SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS, AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH GROWING US CONSIDERATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS FACTORS. MAP EQUIPMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO COME INTO ETHIOPIA FOR SOME TIME THEREAFTER UNDER AGREEMENTS ALREADY CONTRACTED FOR. SECURITY ASSISTANCE CREDITS WOULD ALSO STILL BE AVAILABLE, SHOULD EPMG DESIRE TO AVAIL ITSELF THEREOF, AND FOREIGN MILITARY SALES PROGRAM WAS CONTINUING AS IN PAST. PROBLEMS IN BILATERAL RELATIONS DID EXIST. PUBLIC AND SOMETIMES OFFICIAL HOSTILE REFERENCES TO CIA SCAPEGOAT DID NOT HELP. US ALSO TOOK NOTE OF GREATER PREDILECTION ON PART OF EPMG LEADERS TO MEET AND ASSOCIATE WITH SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, BUT AS LONG AS BOTH COUNTRIES HAD A COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR RESPECTIVE PRIORITY INTERESTS, SEELYE THOUGHT BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP COULD CONTINUE WHICH SERVED MUTUAL INTERESTS OF PRESERVING STABILITY OF REGION.

10. GETACHEW'S COMMENTS ON HUMANRIGHTS ISSUE ARE  
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REPORTED SEPTTEL. ASKED ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR ORDERLY TRANSITION IN DJIBOUTI, HE SAID PREREQUISITE WAS CREATION OF GRAND COALITION GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING ALL POLITICAL GROUPS. FRENCH, HOWEVER, APPEARED TO BE FAVORING ONLY ONE GROUP, CONTAINING STRONG PRO-SOMALI ELEMENT. EPMG FEAR WAS THAT THIS GROUP SUBSERVIENT TO SOMALIA MIGHT ENGINEER PUPPET GOVERNMENT AFTER INDEPENDENCE AND DOCTORED ELECTION, GIVING SOMALIA

DOMINANT ROLE IN TERRITORY. ALTHOUGH FORMER UNI CHIEF AND DJIBOUTI GOVERNMENT LEADER ALI AREF NO LONGER IN POWER, EPMG WANTED UNI TO SERVE AS BALANCING FORCE TO COUNTERACT PRO-SOMALI TREND, BUT UNI WAS NOT GETTING ASSISTANCE IT NEEDS FROM FRENCH OR ELSEWHERE. ACCORDINGLY, UNI WAS NOT PREPARED TO PARTICIPATE IN PARIS ROUNDTABLE AND VIEWED ACCRA MEETING UNDER OAU SUSPICES AS MORE LIKELY VENUE FOR CONFLICTING DJIBOUTI FACTIONS TO COME TO AGREEMENT.

11. ASKED WHAT US COULD DO TO HELP, GETACHEW SOUGHT SUPPORT FOR GRAND COALITION GOVERNMENT IDEA, US SUPPORT FOR GUARANTEES FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES FOR DJIBOUTI INDEPENDENCE, AND TRANSITION TO INDEPENDENCE AND NO ARMED INTERVENTION THEREAFTER. SEELYE REMINDED HIM OF US STATEMENT ON DJIBOUTI AT UNGA LAST DECEMBER, SAID HE WOULD BE BRINGING US VIEWS TO GSDR ATTENTION WITHIN FEW DAYS, AND WOULD LOOK INTO POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER PUBLIC STATEMENT AFTER RETURNING HOME.

12. RETURNING TO SAUD ARABIA, GETACHEW SAID HE COULD NOT ABSOLVE SAUDIS FROM INVOLVEMENT IN TROUBLES IN HORN, SINCE THEY HARBOR ELF ELEMENTS WITHIN THEIR BORDERS AND PROVIDE SECESSIONIST FORCES MATERIEL ASSISTANCE. SAUDI AUTHORITIES ALSO REGULARLY DISCUSSED ERITREA ISSUE WITH NIMEIRI AND HAD INFLUENCED HIS DECISION  
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MORE OPENLY TO BACK SECESSIONISTS. MOREOVER, SAUDIS WERE GIVING ASSISTANCE TO OTHER ANTI-EPMG GROUPS OPERATING FROM BASES IN SUDAN, WHO WERE NOT THEMSELVES SECESSIONIST, BUT ADMITTED THAT THEY WERE ACTING IN CONJUNCTION MILITARILY, WITH ELF.

13. AMB SEELYE SUGGESTED THAT WHEN NIMEIRI SPOKE, THIS DID NOT MEAN THAT THE SAUDIS WERE PUSHING HIM TO DO SO. THE SUDANESE WERE CONCERNED ABOUT THE PRESENCE IN ETHIOPIA OF ANSAR CAMPS, WHICH THEY BELIEVED WERE BEING STIRRED UP AGAINST SUDAN BY LIBYA. AT SAME TIME, HE EXPRESSED PLEASURE OVER SIGNS THAT SUDAN AND ETHIOPIA WERE ATTEMPTING TO RESOLVE THEIR DIFFERENCES. WHILE IN KENYA HE HAD LEARNED OF KENYAN INTEREST IN DEVELOPING BINATIONAL ECONOMIC PROJECTS WITH SOUTHERN SUDAN, AND HE HAD IMPRESSION THAT NIMEIRI HAD DONE MORE THAN HIS PREDECESSORS TO DEVELOP THE SOUTHERN SUDAN AND TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH COUNTRIES TO THE SOUTH. SEELYE NOTED THAT NIMEIRI HAD OFFERED HIS SERVICES TO MEDIATE THE ERITREAN

CRISIS.

14. GETACHEW DISPUTED THE VIEW THAT SUDANESE ARE FOLLOIWNNG MODERATE POLICY, CLAIMING THAT ERITREAN SECESSIONISTS WOULD NEVER HAVE HAD AS MUCH SUCCESS WITHOUT SUDANESE ASSISTANCE. MOREOVER, NIMEIRI'S ALLEGED ROLE AS INTERMEDIARY HAD PROVEN TO BE A FRONT, AND THAT NIMEIRI HIMSELF HAD RECENTLY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HE HAD LOST INTEREST IN INTERMEDIARY ROLE AS RESULT OF EPMG TAKEOVER IN 1974. GETACHEW ALSO CONTENTED THAT LIBYANS WERE NOT INSTIGATING ANY SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES FROM ETHIOPIAN TERRITORY. ASKED ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR SOLUTION IN ERTITREA, GETACHEW SAID THAT ONE FOREIGN COUNTRIES SUSPENDED ASSISTANCE TO INSURGENT ELEMENTS, SOLUTION WOULD BE EASY. WITHOUT SUCH SUSPENSION, HOWEVER,  
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PROBLEM LIKELY TO CONTINUE INDEFINITELY, EPMG FORSAW GRANTING LARGE MEASURE OF AUTONOMY TO ALL REGIONS OF ETHIOPIA, BUT NO SPECIALSTATUS PER SE FOR ERITREA.  
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**TAGS:** PFOR, ET, US, SU, SA, FT, (GETACHEW KIBRET)  
**To:** STATE  
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